

17th May Easter 6: 2020 Facebook live

Welcome and Introduction

Good morning and a warm welcome to the vicarage and to this service on the sixth Sunday of Easter.

The Weekly sheet is on the All Saints Website together with regular updates about church life and various resources.

Please do feel free to like and comment....add prayers during the intercessions or after....

In the gospel Jesus says to us what he said to his disciples, If you love me, keep my commandments. Listening to Jesus' words and making an effort to act on them is what marks out the disciples of Jesus. To be a disciple means to be someone under discipline; disciple and discipline come from the same words. We may recoil from that and want to go our own way.

We know don't always live up to our discipleship and need God's help to do better so let us pause to call to mind those things we have said, or done, or not done, for which we seek his forgiveness,

Confession

Like Mary at the empty tomb, we fail to grasp the wonder of your presence. Lord, have mercy...

Like the disciples behind locked doors, we are afraid to be seen as your followers. Christ have mercy...

Like Thomas in the upper room, we are slow to believe.

Lord, have mercy....

Absolution

May the God of love and power forgive you and free you from your sins, heal and strengthen you by his Spirit, and raise you to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen**

In a moment of silence let us bring to God our hopes and concerns for today and the days ahead....

Collect

Faithful God, who loves us in Christ Jesus,
send your Spirit of truth to dwell within us,
that we may always reject what is false,
live by the commands of Christ,
and be true to the love you have shown us.
Grant this through Jesus Christ, the resurrection and the life,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God for ever and ever.

Amen

Gospel

Alleluia! Christ is risen! *He is risen indeed! Alleluia!*

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John. Glory to you, O Lord. (14:15-21)

Jesus said to his disciples, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. ¹⁷ This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you. ¹⁸ "I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. ¹⁹ In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. ²⁰ On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. ²¹ They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them."

Alleluia! Christ is risen! *He is risen indeed! Alleluia!*

In the name....

Over the last few weeks we have heard memorable and profound accounts from the gospel; the walk to Emmaus, Jesus as the Good shepherd of the sheep, Jesus saying that he is the Way the truth and the life. So the words of Jesus today, at first glance, don't seem that inspiring. "If you love me, you will keep my commandments." Then there is that little word "if." If you love me.... What comes to mind? Maybe those conversations when we have felt some pressure to do something, 'If you loved me, you would.....dot dot dot This seems rather odd and out of character. We are much more used to hearing about the unconditional love of Jesus.

In the garden on the first Easter Day, Jesus met the distraught Mary and simply spoke her name. The sheep recognized the master's voice, and follow him. When the disciples were hiding behind locked doors in fear, Jesus simply stood there among them, and without criticising them, simply spoke words of peace. On the road to Emmaus, Jesus, appeared as a stranger, patiently talking to the disciples about the meaning of scripture. And at the table, when they recognised him, there was no condemnation about how long it had taken them.

The post-Resurrection appearances strongly suggest that the risen Jesus loved his disciples unconditionally.

Yet in today's reading, going back to Jesus' words at the last supper, we have an "if." God's love for us is unconditional, but on our side, Jesus poses a condition: if you love me, you will obey my commandments. Perhaps the emphasis should actually be on the word 'obey'. If you love me, you will keep my commandments

Which commandments? The commandments from Sinai onwards, or should we remember the new commandment that Jesus gave to his friends in the previous chapter: "A new commandment I give you, that you love one another even as I have loved you"?

Maybe the distinction is not the point. The Ten Commandments can be seen as a way of living that describes a life for humans individually and socially that is consistent with the life God wants for us. When Jesus spoke of keeping my commandments, he was not talking of a specific set of rules but rather, of following his way of life. What is involved here is Christian discipleship. We can't truly call ourselves disciples of Jesus if we don't listen to his words and make an effort to live by them. One wouldn't be much of a Christian if one didn't try to live as Jesus taught. We may think of God's commandments as guiding us in learning how to love him and each other. So it's not so much "if you love me, you will obey," but "in loving me, you are obeying."

(What does this mean in practice? People should know that we are Christians by our acts, not just by what we say with our lips. Love is shown in deeds. We could imagine Jesus speaking to us now:

Do not return evil for evil. Nothing is achieved by retaliation, except to increase the darkness of the world.

Do not give up hope when times are difficult. Keep on trusting in me and in the Father.

Do love your enemies. Do be kind to those you don't like, or who may have been unkind to you. It is hard. But if you do this, you will be the salt of the earth.

Do give generously. The measure you give to others, will be the measure you receive from God.

And love one another, the way I have loved you. Then all will know that you are disciples of mine.

It is not easy to live as a disciple of Jesus in the modern world. It never was an easy thing. And for that reason Jesus has given us the Holy Spirit. When we are weak we should pray for the Holy Spirit. The Spirit comforts us in times of sorrow, enlightens us in times of darkness, and strengthens us in times of weakness. When we follow this guide to living, we are taking in the Spirit of Truth. This Spirit is what helps us to see and respond to God's life in ourselves and each other.

Hearing of the Holy Spirit that Jesus is sending reminds us that Ascension Day is coming and Pentecost is at the end of the month. Concluding with words from the Collect: Faithful God, who loves us in Christ Jesus, send your Spirit of truth to dwell within us, that we may always reject what is false, live by the commands of Christ, and be true to the love you have shown us. Amen

Intercessions:

Lord Jesus, you have promised to be with us forever; teach us to rejoice in your presence, free us from anxiety, help us to know you are always by our side, that we may work with you and to your glory....L in your mercy,

For the church, ... those hearing the gospel for the first time, those searching for truth and meaning...those alone, strengthen all who seek to do your will and fulfill your commandments. L in your mercy...

World.....Community...

Merciful God, we entrust to your tender care those who are ill or in pain, knowing that whenever danger threatens your everlasting arms are there to hold them safe. Comfort and heal them, and restore them to health and strength; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Gracious God, give skill, sympathy and resilience to all who are caring for the sick, and your wisdom to those searching for a cure. Strengthen them with your Spirit, that through their work many will be restored to health; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

We pray for the elderly, for those who are in Care Homes, and all who are coming to the end of their earthly journey. We pray for those who have lost their way. And for all who are distressed, and not at peace, may you come to them and grant them peace. Lord in....

We pray for those who have died, those who have lost family members or friends due to the virus,

Our father.....

Concluding prayer and Blessing:

God our Father, whose Son Jesus Christ gives the water of eternal life: may we thirst for you, the spring of life and source of goodness, through him who is alive and reigns, now and for ever. Amen.

Alleluia! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

God, who through the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ has given us the victory, give you joy and peace in your faith; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Go in the peace of Christ, Alleluia, alleluia!
Thanks be to God, alleluia, alleluia!

Eucharist 11 am Tuesday Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2069378522?pwd=WkVWMUpZR01ieXE3dFFVK2ZVcHVkQT09>

Updated OoS on the website (covid 19 page)

Prayer Group 7 pm Thursday, Zoom

Coffee morning 11 am Saturday, Zoom

Access details have been sent by email

Sunday 10.30 and 5.30

<https://www.facebook.com/AllSaintsPeterborough/>

Notices:

Weekly Sheet and other resources on the All Saints' website

Email list – let me know if you wish to be on that.

<https://allsaintspeterborough.org.uk/covid-19/>

Daily Hope the line, which is available 24 hours a day on 0800 804 8044, If you know of someone who isn't on internet, let them know, ...

Online collection:

<https://allsaintspeterborough.org.uk/about/giving/>